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PUZZLING NEIGHBORS

A HISTORICAL GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING
MODERN MEXICO

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PROLOGUE

History is not chance. It is not a series of fortuitous events.

Each of its stages is created by individual men.

History is not an entity with an existence of its own, alien to humanity. It is not a series of unavoidable and inexplicable events.

History is the work of human action. It is a result of the actions of men who decide, or who accommodate, or of men who are ingenuous, and others who allow themselves to be swept up by the current of alien wills. History is the work of those who struggle to create realities and the struggle of those who oppose them, and of those who prefer to remain between light and shadow. **It** is human interaction.

History **is** created by men, and nothing occurs without sufficient cause. Even that which appears to be chance has its cause. If Napoleon expected victory at Waterloo with the arrival of Marshal Grouchy, and if his defeat was caused because the Prussian general Blucher arrived earlier to save Wellington, this was not an accidental event. Blucher, who was 73 years old and ill, was more courageous and active than Grouchy.

If in the decisive battle of Tecuac, General Manuel Gonzalez arrived to reinforce Porfirio Diaz before General Alonso could help General Alatorre, this also did not occur by chance. Gonzalez had moved more skillfully than his rival.

If in the grand battle of Kursk the Soviets placed their cannons in the form of a funnel aimed directly on the route of penetration that was to be followed by the German tanks, this was not by chance nor by guesswork. The Soviets had in their hands the German plan of attack.

It is customary to ascribe to chance the subtle succession of events whose causes it has not been possible to establish, but nevertheless the causes exist.

If at present there are so many nations who live under forms which are alien to their true essences, and who march like captives along alien roads, this is not the work of chance. There exist forces which compel them to this, although we do not have the primary proofs.

It could be said that "Laboratory History" operates exclusively on the basis of primary documents; however, many clues are not to be found there, just as in a laboratory examination, many filterable viruses can elude our observation, and these active elements must be detected by other means.

I mention this because the great success of the books written by Salvador Borrego, is attributable to the fact that they identify the genealogical tree of the great historical events.

This is why *Puzzling Neighbors* takes as its starting point the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation; not because what is happening today was then determined, but because there, in the 16th Century, a force with a history of thousands of years, adopted new religious forms, new economic policies and a new political strategy to give a new and vigorous impulse to its struggle, and this influence comes down to our own days, and operates powerfully on the first power of the world, with unavoidable repercussions on the history of Mexico.

Javier Martinez Mena. Gomez

Palacio, Durango.

CHAPTER 1

The Synthesis of Enormous Forces

*Luther personified diverse
currents which up to his time
had remained
dispersed.*

With the exception of a very small circle of "initiates", all Europe was surprised by the explosion of the Protestant Reformation in 1517, set off and headed by Luther. A gigantic echo reverberated internationally, and in that struggle were implicated kings, princes, intellectuals, artisans, farmers, and whole nations.

The "Protestants", who were at first called Evangelists, spoke out against the riches of the Catholic Church, against the worldly life of many of its members, against religious indifference, against the Vatican, etc., and to this uproar was added the motivation of many who were anxious to confiscate ecclesiastic properties.

The spark that Luther used was the protest over the sale of indulgences for the construction of the Church of St. Peter at Rome.

The fire of the Reformation spread with unexpected rapidity and threatened to consume everything. It seemed as if the Catholic Church was to be reduced to a weak minority.

Just as icebergs show only a small part of their mass above the surface, Luther was only the tip of an iceberg. Below him lay a vast force that had been acting in dispersed condition during many centuries. The French historian Jean Lombard is one of those who has made this clear, for he says, "the Reformation does not result from the action of one man, nor from the effect of one doctrine; it does not carry with it anything original. In destroying Catholicism, the universal character of the Church, in provoking a rupture with Rome, the Reformation separates Christianity from its universal contributions... it reduces it solely to the Hebrew sources of the Old Testament.

"This new synthesis, carried forward by very old heretical currents, is not the work of some personalities, no matter how forceful they might be, but of societies and groups, and of shadowy forces slowly formed, which centered their aims in convergent and continuous fashion against the common enemy: the Church."(1)

He adds that numerous sects spread their influences within the councils of the secret societies until one of these, the Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians, was able to effect the synthesis of these forces and to act simultaneously in the political and in the religious spheres. This Brotherhood was the co-ordinator, and the spirit which moved the Reformation.

Luther's movement took its nourishment or impulse from several sects, among which were the following:.

The Gnostics. This sect enjoyed its period of greatest popularity in the 3rd Century, and held that it possessed "absolute knowledge". Some of its groups called themselves Gnostic Christians, many of them were incorporated later into Manichaeism.

The Manichaeians. Manichaeus, who was born in Babylon, called himself the last and greatest of the prophets. He held that man is the work of Satan, who furnished man with a portion of the spirit that he had stolen from God. The Manichaeians were rigorously ascetic (mortification of the senses) and they were fanatic rivals of the Catholic Church. At one time even St. Augustine was attracted to them.

The Cathars. Another branch of the Manichaeians, with the variant that they considered themselves "purer". They extended through France, Germany, England and Italy.

The Albigensians. The first site from which they expanded was the French city of Albi, in the 12th and 13th Centuries. They were opposed to the ecclesiastic hierarchy and to the sacraments.

The Lollards. They originated in the 16th Century in Holland. They said that they were the most fervent followers of the New Testament, against the Church.

(1) *Quien Inspiró La Reforma?* Jean Lombard Coeurderoy. Madrid, 1979.

The VALDENSIANS. This was a sect created by Peter of Valdo, in the French city of Lyon during the 12th Century. They considered that religion should base itself, and emphasize, poverty and the poor; they opposed the Mass and they extended from France into Switzerland and Poland. In 1532, they came over in great numbers to the Reformation.

The CABALISTS. These propagated by word of mouth the Jewish tradition that claims to possess the hidden secret of the Old Testament. Through anagrams, transpositions and combinations of letters or Hebrew words, they "deciphered" the texts of Scripture. *Freemasonry defines the Cabala as "the mystic or theosophical philosophy of the Jews... it is intimately related with the symbolic science of Freemasonry... It is employed a great deal in the high degrees, and whole rituals have been constituted under its principles, for which reason it deserves a place in any general treatise on Freemasonry"* (2)

The cabalists and their Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians connected the diverse sects, which were distinct from them, and gave them a common denominator in their hostility or hatred to Catholicism.

Many historians repeat that Luther made a visit to the Vatican and was disgusted by the luxury and immorality which he saw there. It is also a fact that he was indignant over the sale of indulgences, but *this was not what was fundamental in his proclamation of reformation, for he did not call for morality, but rather established a whole different religion that would displace Catholicism.* He denied dogmas and traditions. He was not- as it was claimed-a reformer of the conduct of the Papal Court.

The Spanish historian Orestes Ferrara examined numerous documents of the 16th Century, and he states that false converts, accepted within the Vatican, such as Dr. Bonet de Latis and Bishop Pedro de Aranda, circulated and supported much of the literature, hostile to the Vatican, which circulated in Europe.(3)

(2) *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry.* Albert Gallatin Mackey, 33rd Degree. San Antonio, Tx. 1925.

(3) *El Papa Borgia, Alejandro VI.* Orestes Ferrara. Madrid, 1943.

But even if this activity promoted an exaggerated appreciation of conditions, it is an admitted fact that at the Papal Court there was licentious life under Pope Innocent VIII, (1484-1492), and more under his successor Alexander VI, (1492-1503). Under the next Pope, Julius II, (1503-1513), things were somewhat improved, but much license came back into the Papal Court under Leo X, (1513-1521). Then Adrian VI tried to moralize prelates and officials, but he only lived 20 months and was not able to complete his work.

But quite apart from such immoral behaviour which caused a grave loss of prestige, what was decisive was the existence of an ancient movement against the dogmatic and traditional bases of the Church. The Cabalist John Reuchlin, famous author of a Hebrew grammar, aided in the publication of pamphlets against the Vatican, with the help of theologist George Trismegistus and of Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nottesheim, author of *The Occult Philosophy*. Reuchlin and his associates formed various secret groups in Paris, Germany, Italy and London, dating from 1510. The Masonic branch of the Rosicrucians co-ordinated the various sects, on the one hand, with the Cabalists on the other. Later they invited Luther to participate in the campaign "against the mercantile and rapacious Rome of the Popes".

Luther was selected not as a theologian, but as a fiery orator, and he started by talking of "reforming" the Church, but he rapidly passed on to the creation of another church in 1525. He changed the Mass, the Communion, the hierarchy, confession, the catechism etc.

It was all prepared beforehand so that Luther's rebellion should have a continental response from groups which everywhere followed his lead.

As time went by, many people of good faith affiliated themselves to the diverse Protestant branches, attracted by charitable and, humanistic aspects. *It must be understood that these persons are not necessarily connected with the occultist groups of the Cabala.*

Religion, Economy, Politics.

*Three motives were taken
up under one single
aspect, that of religious
'reform.*

While Luther was winning thousands of followers in Bohemia, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy and Spain, Calvin appeared on the scene and established a dictatorship in Geneva, from where Calvinism spread into France, England, Scotland, the Netherlands and then even to Hungary and Poland.

Both Luther and Calvin had in their favor the operations of an international organization which provided a resounding echo to their preaching.

The historian Jastrow, among others, says that the regime established by Calvin in Geneva in 1536, displayed "forms of terrible severity... From there Calvinism reached France, England, Scotland and the Netherlands and extended toward the east to Poland and Hungary. It did not tolerate Catholic bishops, priests, or governors".(4)

Calvin gave to Protestantism its most implacable form in the period between 1536 and 1564.

His doctrine spoke of "*predestination*", according to which the elect of the Lord are destined to salvation and the rest to eternal damnation. Those who are "the elect" can be distinguished because "wealth is the tangible and palpable sign of the blessing of the Lord". (In this there was much "occult knowledge" of Cabalistic origin).

It was in this way that the new religion had a terrible discriminatory meaning and an economic goal. Consequently, in the Calvinistic synod of 1552, Catholic teaching with regard to the "just price" and usury was abolished, and thus the way was cleared so that "the elect of the Lord" could resort to astute dealings, which should identify them, through the accumulation of riches and power, as those who were "predestined". This was "Manifest

(4) *Universal History*. J. Jastrow

Destiny", the old Jewish idea that the Messiah grants to his own the dominion of the world.

To construct this particular theology, they relied on the Old Testament, interpreted by Hebrew scholars and Cabalists. For "the elect", the traditional moral constraints are not valid. They turned to Leviticus 25:43-45: "Thou shalt not rule (thy brother) with rigour... (but) the children of the strangers...shall be your bondmen for ever", and Deuteronomy 23:20: "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shall not lend upon usury".

Consequently, *this particular type of Protestantism advanced simultaneously from the religious sphere, to the political and economic sphere*. If "predestination" is divine will, then, from predestination one can derive the right to hegemony over everything else. And of course action against Catholicism is justified, since it is an obstacle to such a doctrine.

The historian Lombard says that for *radical Protestantism* the City of God as offered by St. Augustine, ceased to have validity, and it took the road of a new form of society dominated by money, the city of Gold. He adds that according to William Guy Carr, author of *Pawns in the Game* (pg. 20), the B'nai B'rith of Paris acclaimed Calvin in 1936 as a Jew whose real name was Caïn or Cohen.

Calvinistic Protestantism, when it passed over into England, moderated its form somewhat, but not its essence nor its goals. Since its followers were people of strict customs, very pious, they were given the name also of "Puritans".

The *elite* of Protestantism (with its constituent elements of *religion, economics and politics*) found very fertile ground in England, taking advantage of the development of machines and of industry. The famous sociologist Max Weber states that modern Capitalism has its origin in "the Protestant ethic", although it would be more exact to call modern Capitalism "super-capitalism." (5)

(5) *General Economic History, Economics and Society.*
Max Weber, 1864-1920

The Counter-Reformation

*The peace of Westphalia was
not the end of the long
struggle between the two
powerful forces.*

Lutheranism and Calvinism advanced with such strength that it seemed they would dominate all Europe with their movement for reform, which was tempting in the religious and very strong in the economic and political spheres. But in the meantime, almost without a plan and providentially, the Counter-Reformation appeared on the scene.

A Spanish soldier, Ifiigo Lopez de Recalde , was seriously wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1512; though his legs were fractured and though he suffered two operations, he overcame his pain and decided to take up arms again for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. However, when he perceived the inroads of Protestantism, he formed the Company of Jesus, with military discipline. He made his new order a religious militia. Lopez de Recalde, known today as St. Ignatius of Loyola, together with the theologians Laynez and Salmeron, directed the renovation of Catholicism until it reached the Council of Trent, 1545-1563, which defined or clarified many points of Catholicism.

Due to an accident in the royal successions, a member of the House of Austria became Emperor of Germany and Spain, that is to say Charles I of Spain (and V of Germany). At nineteen years of age he took up the sceptre over his vast empire and reached Spain without having yet learned Spanish. He immediately supported with the sword the struggle of the Counter- Reformation which the Company of Jesus had initiated in the religious sphere.

The historian J.P. Oliveira Martins says that what made Charles V an eminent figure in history is that he was the head of a heroic and Catholic Spain and not only just one more German emperor.

"Surrounded by his statesmen and captains, and relying on the invincible peninsular infantry, arbiter of the treasures of the Indies, when he crossed Europe from

one end to the other, speaking to each nation in its tongue, fighting against Francis of France and the Protestants of Germany, and against Suleiman, the commander of the Turks who were invading Austria, Charles V was the authentic defender of the Christian world... almost as much a monarch in the spiritual as in the temporal ". (6)

The wave of a Catholicism of renewed faith spread from one end to the other of Europe. The work of Charles V, on whose dominions "the sun never set", was continued with greater concentration by his successor Philip II, the most powerful emperor of his age.

Philip II, who ruled between 1555 and 1598, waged war against the French, the Turks (the Battle of Lepanto), the English (who defeated his Invincible Armada in 1588), and particularly against the rulers who upheld Protestantism.

Hungary and Poland, who had a great number of Protestants, were reclaimed for Catholicism. In France, where Calvinism had begun to dominate, a Catholic party regained thousands of minds, and in Switzerland several cantons were recuperated.

The struggle of the Counter-Reformation did not conclude until 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia which brought to an end the bloody Thirty Years' War. Many regions of Germany had been almost depopulated. People were fighting over the carcasses of dead horses for food. The historian Hendrick Van Loon says that of 18 million inhabitants in Central Europe, only 4 million survived. Another historian, Andre Maurois, says that the population of Germany was reduced to one third after the battles between kingdoms, duchies, principalities, and counties. It was a *religious-political-economic* struggle which was especially bloody. (7)

During the Counter-Reformation there was a great 'positive reaction in favor of the Church. Ecclesiastic discipline was re-established, education was encouraged,

(6) *Historia de la CivilizaciOn Iberica*. J.P. Oliveira Martins.

(7) *History of Germany*. Andre Maurois
(original name, Emile Herzog).

the number of missions increased and important points of doctrine were defined.

In the political sphere, the Counter-Reformation was also victorious in parts of Germany, Austria and Poland.

Naturally, the Peace of Westphalia was really rather a kind of armistice, for it did not mean the disappearance of the two great forces which had come into conflict with the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. *The struggle would continue, applying different methods and under different aspects.*

In England, Protestantism declared that Spain was "the natural enemy".

The Endorsement to Mexico

*The "elite", with a
moderate strategy,
participated eminently in
the creation of the great Power
of North America.*

When it established the principle of the free examination of Scripture, Protestantism favored the birth of numerous branches or sects, and some of them have kept themselves strictly in the religious sphere. *This should be kept clearly in mind to avoid confusion or false judgements.* On the other hand, an "elite" retained its expansive social principles, that is to say: to consider itself as "the chosen of the Lord", as against those "not chosen", and predestined to damnation.

From this derived, for the "elite", a kind of special legality of all combinations which might increase its political and economic power as a "visible sign of predestination". The vanguard of this elite began to arrive from across the Atlantic, on the northeastern coasts of the colonies of North America. In 1620, a group of Calvinist "Puritans" arrived in Massachusetts Bay and founded the colony of New Plymouth, from where they expanded into a vast territory.

Samuel Oppenheim says that the first organized group of Jewish immigrants, under the leadership of Asser Levy, arrived in 1654, in what is today New York. (8)

Another historian of the same origin, Dr. Rudolf Glanz, says as early as the first half of the 18th century, Hebrew groups had already established their superior influence. "The first three presidents of Harvard College were famous Jewish scholars. During more than 150 years, the opening ceremonies of that college were in fact a Hebrew prayer... The same situation prevailed at Yale and at King's College, now the Univeristy of Columbia". (9)

Such immigrants, with broad experience in political and religious struggles, brought over to North America their well-prepared leaders to form esoteric Masonic Brotherhoods. In that vast and wealthy territory, free from any coercive force, they rose speedily in finance. Haym Solomon, Robert Morris, the Cohens and the Mins lent their economic support to George Washington's war and then obtained a license to open a "Bank of the United States" (with eight branches), and privileges which made it possible to engage in ingenious speculations.

President Jefferson named Albert Gallatin, recently arrived from Geneva, as Secretary of the Treasury, and this was again a blessing for the "elite".

Economic influence, easily flowed over into political influence, for it subsidized electoral campaigns so that certain candidates could reach positions in the Congress, in the Supreme Court or in the Governorships.

The three pre-fabricated crises of 1837, 1869 and 1874 ruined millions of citizens, but they enriched, fabulously, hundreds of families of "the chosen".

The concessions to build railroads were granted to Jay Gould, Daniel Drew, James Fisk, Cornelius Vanderbilt and others. There were huge speculations.

The wealthy family of eight brothers Seligman furnished funds for Lincoln's struggle during the Civil War, and was able to obtain a bank charter. The bank

(8) *History of the Jews in America*. Samuel Oppenheim, New York.

(9) *Trescientos Anos de Vida y Actividades Judias en los EE.UU.* Dr. Rudolf Glanz. *Tribuna Israelita*. Mexico, Junio 1954.

speedily lent its assistance to the presidential campaign of Grant, an eminent Mason, and the elder of the Seligmans was named Secretary of the Treasury.

At this time, 1875, there were already 10,000 Lodges operating in the United States, among which the most influential was the Independent Order of the Sons of the Covenant (the B'nai B'rith which was made up almost exclusively of "the chosen").

The "trusts" flourished. John D. Rockefeller in oil; Daniel and Simon Guggenheim in copper; Mellon in aluminum, etc.

John Pierpont Morgan created the steel trust and then he set up one of the most powerful banking houses in the world. Abraham Kuhn, already immensely wealthy, associated successively with Solomon Loeb, Jacob Schiff and Paul Warburg, and his banking house controlled more than 30% of the US banking system.

Emile Herzog, also known as Andre Maurois of the French Academy of Sciences, called many of these magnates "pirates of finance". He says that with the support of legislators who owed them favors, they could lower costs, increase prices and obtain enormous profits from stock exchange maneuvers with earnings of up to 800% in rapid transactions.

"The conquerors of the 19th Century" he adds, "showed very few scruples, and accumulated superhuman fortunes through inhuman means; they treated the masses who served them as mere cannon-fodder. It is an era of great individuals, monstrously egotistic and marvelously efficient... the system of indirect elections made it easier, to a certain extent, that those who had entered the club of rich men should slip into the Senate, and over these, public opinion was incapable of exerting any influence". (10) But all this was very natural according to their own ethic of "the chosen of the Lord", though it should be said that in the New World they did not present those unpopular characteristics of exalted violence which had been displayed in Geneva. On the contrary they took on democratic forms, and many supermagnates hushed up the

(10) *History of the United States*. Andre Maurois

scandal of their speculations through donations to universities and other altruistic foundations. But they retained their essence.

(When examined in its most general aspects, *the age of the Reformation was essentially, a novel power-play by the Cabalists*. Although they did not obtain everything they wished, due to the Counter-Reformation, from there on they used Calvinism and the proliferation of Masonic lodges to gain political and economic influence, and later, in the last century, they created Marxism as another new instrument of conquest).

Now it is clear that the "elite", which has been active since the birth of the United States, brought with it from Europe an implacable enmity against Spain and against the Catholic religion; and since on this continent Mexico represented both of these entities, Mexico became the object of an action which has always operated in the decisive moments of our history.

CHAPTER 2

National Memory

*The past explains
the present, and the future is
built on the present.*

To suppose that the history of Mexico is exclusively the record of our own strengths and of our own mistakes, would be as much as to suppose that we are an island in outer space, sovereign and lonely, impervious to all external influence. On the other hand, to see our history as an interaction of forces, where the external force is frequently the more powerful, may seem disagreeable, but it is more realistic.

Such an examination helps us to understand better several national events and to clarify the limits of our action and of our responsibility.

It is a vital function of history to enter into the most profound causes of its happening, and to attain this it must overthrow fallacies or pseudo-historic dogmas.

Notwithstanding that history is only the past, on the past we explain the present and the future has its foundations upon the present. *The influence of the past continues to act one way or another.* A nation with a deformed history is a nation with a sick memory. As Fernandez Campo says, "Amnesia, when it paralyzes the memory of a person, even though the memory is only what is past, modifies his present and his future. In the same way, to withdraw and alter the essential parts of the history of a nation is not only a vain fiction of "that which was" but also a decisive influence on that which is, and on that which will be". (1)

With this in mind, with the object of understanding that our chequered history has not depended exclusively on ourselves, let us review several outstanding events in the last 177 years of the life of Mexico.

(1) *Identidad Nacional*. Felix Fernandez Campo, 1987.

We Were Told: "No Empire!"

Mexico was born as an empire, the inheritance of the Aztec empire and of the Spanish empire.

For very natural reasons Spain could not retain indefinitely its , vast colonies in the New World, but the process of independence was also pushed forward by the international enemies of Spain as an act of vengeance and in the pursuit of booty.

Well-read historians such as Mr. Richard E. **Chism** and the Mexican Antonio Gibaja y Patron furnish us with much data on the foreign agents who visited the New Spain and other Spanish colonies at the beginning of the past century to promote independence, and who came from the United States, from England and from France. Luis de Onis, plenipotentiary minister of Spain in North America also reported these activities to the Crown. Specifically, Mr. Chism says that there was contact with Don Miguel Hidalgo , the father of Mexican independence, since 1806. Of course such agents were not working out of altruism but with the object of booty for their cause. (2)

We do not doubt the good intentions of Hidalgo, but of course, he lacked political experience and was not a military leader. The strange idea took hold in his good faith that he should oppose what was Indian to what was Spanish. This gave rise to a hatred incapable of distinguishing between "Gachupines", as pure Spaniards were called, and "Criollos" or "Mestizos", those of mixed Spanish and Indian descent. This was the cause of tremendous massacres in Guanajuato, Valladolid, and Guadalajara when independence began in 1810, and this blind hatred also gave rise to the destruction of aqueducts, large haciendas, mills, mines and shops.

Hidalgo was able to bring together some 80,000 Indians. He soon lost control, and his insurrection

(2) *A Contribution to the Masonic History of Mexico.*

Richard E. Chism.

degenerated into pillage and desertion. Finally, his uprising ended in total failure at the battle of Calderon, January 17, 1811, having begun only four months earlier.

It is a fact recognized by many that the cause of the failure was that he based independence on *racial struggle*. Many sympathizers of the movement for independence abstained from following him when they saw the absurdity of his tactic.

It seems that Hidalgo had fallen into the trap of such a strategy under somebody's advice, and this was the reason that independence was delayed 10 years, and that there were losses of 1,000 million pesos, that is to say, 40 times the annual budget of that time, which was 25 million pesos.

It was a different story when General Agustin de Iturbide proclaimed a Plan of Independence in Iguala on February 24, 1821. This plan defined the Mexican nationality as originating in the combination of two races: the aboriginal Indians and the Spanish. According to this generous and realistic definition, all the inhabitants of

- Mexico had equal rights, whether they were Indians, of mixed blood; or Spaniards. This plan also specified "the supremacy of the Catholic religion".

This independence, which Iturbide achieved in only 18 months-with the help of Guerrero-was based on an idea of harmony and unity.

Iturbide gave to the political institutions of the country the form of an empire, a system which corresponded with the inheritance of the Aztec empire and of the Spanish empire. The Mexican Congress approved this on May 20, 1822.

However, *the United States withheld the recognition of the government of Iturbide* and sent Joel Roberts Poinsett to Mexico. Joel Roberts Poinsett was a great-grandson of the Jewish Calvinists Pierre Poinsett and Sarah Fouchereau, who in 1685 had emigrated from France to the United States.

Joel Roberts Poinsett had contacts with the Scottish Rite Lodges which had been at work here since the final days of the Spanish rule, and besides he brought "lights" for the York Rite. In Mexico City he had an interview with Iturbide and suggested to him that he adopt a constitutional system similar to that of the United States.

This proposal carried a great deal of deep meaning because the Mexican Empire could prolong itself indefinitely and come to be the political head of a great part of Latin America, where on the other hand a republican and federal system, through the change of government every four years, gave to international Freemasonry the opportunity of supporting the group which it chose, and in this manner it could increase its infiltration. However, Iturbide replied courteously, that Mexico was different from the United States, and he rejected the proposal.

In the presence of some officials of Iturbide such as Juan Francisco Ascarate, Poinsett let slip an insinuation that there might be a recognition if Mexico ceded to the United States its northern territories, which, he said, were really more of a burden than an advantage to us. Ascarate coldly replied that Mexico would not cede one inch of territory.(3)

Iturbide was a career officer, a good organizer and commander of troops, but in the crisis of the birth of an empire and in the face of foreign pressure, he lacked the political wisdom to skirt serious dangers.

To begin with, he believed in the free play of the electoral forces as an integrator of a Congress, and had not formed a team who would be loyal to him. The secret lodges infiltrated and acted within this power vacuum. The Masonic lodges were unknown to the immense majority of the new directing class of the nation. The Scottish and York Rites united for a brief period; they provoked disorders and overthrew Iturbide, only ten months after his coronation.

Just as Poinsett had suggested, the Venerable Freemason Miguel Ramos Arizpe, took the U.S. Constitution as his blueprint, and upon it he drew up the Mexican Constitution of 1824, and the country adopted the new name of United Mexican States.

(3) *Early Diplomatic Relations Between the U.S. and Mexico.*
W.R. Manning.